

Brothers In Arms: Reunion in Iraq

By Pfc. Matthew McLaughlin
10th Mnt. Div. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq - The last time Sgt. Dale Balsis, 411th Combat Engineer Battalion, saw his older brother, 1st Lt. Bernard Balsis, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, was home in the tropical climate of Hawaii. When Dale opened the door to his room in Iraq one sweltering day in July, he was pleasantly surprised to find his brother at his doorstep.

"I was very surprised," Dale said. "I had no idea when he would arrive. I knew he would be stationed around here, but I didn't know he would be right on Camp Victory. Now he's a 10 minute walk from me."

The last time the brothers saw each other was in February, when Bernard was on leave from his last deployment to Iraq. They spent a few days together, but Dale was conducting training with his unit, preparing for his own deployment. Dale deployed to Iraq in March, and his brother returned to Iraq in July.

While training in Kuwait, Bernard received confirmation that he and the 2nd Brigade Combat Team (Commandos), 10th Mountain Division, would be stationed at Camp Victory. The base covers a large region, however. Dale wasn't certain that he and his brother would get to see much of each other. He was excited to discover that Bernard's unit resided across the street from him.

"It's a weird coincidence he ended up right next door to me," Bernard said. "It's nice to have family around. We're both in disbelief that we ended up on the same base."

Bernard and Dale now spend their spare time together. They said they play video games, watch movies and talk about back home and what they will do with the money they earned in Iraq. They both have a passion for cars and plan to make improvements to their cars.

Their interest in cars and movies aren't the only similarities they share. Bernard and Dale look strikingly similar. Their physical traits at times created confusion amongst the 2-14 INF Soldiers, Bernard said.

"Some of my Soldiers saw him walk by and said 'that's not the lieutenant.' They didn't figure it out until I told them he was my brother."

The time spent together is a luxury the pair did not have for several years.

"We didn't see each other much in his college years because he was at West Point," Dale said. "We see each other more over here than we did at home."

Bernard was also able to witness his brother receive the Purple Heart for shrapnel wounds to his left hand after an insurgent attack. Bernard was on patrol, so he wasn't able to attend the ceremony. But Dale's command held a second smaller ceremony for the brothers.



By Pfc. Matthew McLaughlin, 10th Mnt. Div. Public Affairs

First Lt. Bernard Balsis, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment is reunited with his brother, Sgt. Dale Balsis, 411th Combat Engineer Battalion, while stationed in Baghdad, Iraq. Dale received the Purple Heart and his unit held a second ceremony so Bernard could attend.

Bernard heard that Dale was injured while he was training in Kuwait. Bernard said he was greatly concerned for his brother when he initially heard via e-mail that he was hurt. He was very relieved to hear from Dale, who told him that he was fine.

"I was worried at first," he said. "I worry about him, like older brothers do about younger brothers. But once I found out he was okay, I made fun of him. I make fun of him, but I'm glad he's safe."

"He called it a mosquito bite," Dale said.

Dale's injury was a great concern for their family, he said. Having the brothers together eases the stress slightly.

"Our parents are proud and happy for us," Bernard said. "They are at times more worried than happy. But they're both happy we're here together. They send one of us stuff in the mail to share."

Their parents will also be able to send collective birthday presents. Both brothers have their birthdays in October. They will celebrate together in Iraq, Bernard said. They are also trying to go on leave together.

Both brothers said they are very pleased with their chance meeting in Iraq. Dale said their bonding takes the edge off of a hard days work.

"It makes me feel closer to home," he said.

91st Eng. Helps with Detainee Release

By Sgt. Dan Purcell
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Approximately 200 former prisoners from Abu-Ghraib prison stepped off of buses to a welcome committee of local sheiks and members of the Iraqi media. The former prisoners, charged with various crimes, were part of the detainee release



Staff Sgt. Orlando Torres, 91st Engineer Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division checks a recently released detainee's identification card against a master list.

program that was facilitated by the 91st Engineer Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

As each former prisoner disembarked the bus, their identification was verified and each was met by a sheik or sheiks from their communities who play a pivotal part in the lives of the Iraqi people.

"The sheiks are here to welcome them back into the community and to act as guarantors that certify these individuals will not commit future crimes against the Iraqi people or the Multi-National Forces," Lt. Col. Christopher Martin, 91st ENG, commander said.

In addition to their heartfelt homecoming, each detainee was given \$25 to help get them started.

"After they've been identified and greeted by the sheiks, they then walk out the gate where they are met by members of their family. The whole process takes about an hour," Capt. Marc Chung, 425th Civil Affairs Battalion team leader said.

Following the detainee release the sheiks and the



Photos by Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

Soldiers, local sheiks and Iraqi media members are crowded together during a recent detainee release program that took place at Camp Hawk, home of the 303rd Iraqi National Guard Battalion.

media attended a press conference with Lt. Col. Martin.

"There is a perception amongst the sheiks and the Iraqis that we are arresting innocent people, and it is something that they tend to focus on," Martin said. "The point we have to make is that they are not innocent people but people who have had their files reviewed by Iraqi judges who have decided that they have spent enough time in jail based on the crime they committed."

According to Martin the Iraqis don't have a formal

court system that sentences a person to jail for a specific period of time, like the U.S. does. Here, a prisoner's file is reviewed periodically by a board of judges who make sure that the individual does not serve more time than the level of crime he committed and the law allows.

"We are here to facilitate the handing over of these men to the sheiks so they can be reintegrated into their respective communities, and to show that we have been working with the sheiks all along," Martin said.

Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

It's a gift.
innahaa hadeeya

Monday
High: 106
Low: 76



Tuesday
High: 108
Low: 78



Wednesday
High: 106
Low: 78



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

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News Notes

Navy to Shut Down Transmitters

CLAM LAKE, Wis. (AP) - The Navy said Friday it will dismantle two huge radio transmitters in northern Wisconsin and Michigan used for submarine communications, including one that has been the site of repeated demonstrations by anti-nuclear weapons activists. The \$400 million submarine communications system, which has been in use since 1989, is outdated and no longer needed, the Navy said. Radio transmissions from the sites, in the Chequamegon National Forest near Clam Lake and in Michigan's Escanaba State Forest near Republic, will cease Sept. 30. The Navy has used the "extremely low frequency" transmitters to maintain secure communications with submarines at sea, but now will use 12 "very low frequency" transmitters located worldwide.

Doctors Ready for Face Transplant

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky (AP) - A team of doctors from Louisville and the Netherlands say in a new medical journal article that they are ready to perform a face transplant, a procedure considered controversial by some medical ethicists. The doctors said they don't have a prime candidate for the procedure, and they are not actively screening for candidates. Besides Louisville, such transplants are being considered by teams in Cleveland, England and France.

AN OFFICER'S ROLE ...

Officers Steer Students in Right Direction

COPPERAS COVE, Texas (*Copperas Cove Daily Herald*) - When Lorraine Palmer graduated from Copperas Cove High School in 1987, she never expected to be looming over the hallways of the school more than 15 years later.

"It's not all about enforcement," said patrol officer Lorraine Palmer. "We try to steer them in the right direction."

Palmer and patrol officer Kevin Beckam of the Copperas Cove Police Department are school enforcement officers at Cove high school. Palmer has been with the department for five years and for the last four years she has worked as an SEO.

"They're part of the schools just like the teachers," said Lt. Danny Austin. "They just have a little different role."

Palmer said her daily job, which begins at 6:30 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m., focuses on patrolling the hallways and conducting conflict mediation and criminal enforcement on crimes like fighting, smoking on campus and theft.

"If they're in the hallways, we're in the hallways," Palmer said.

The department does not keep separate statistics for the school policing, but Palmer said she has researched the crime rates of other high schools and said Cove is very low.

"It's like it's their own house and they don't want to steal from their own house," Palmer said of the students at the high school.



Copperas Cove Daily Herald

Patrol Officer Lorraine Palmer watches over the crowds of students as she talks with a Copperas Cove High School staff member. Palmer's duties as a school enforcement officer ensure that when the students are in the hallways she is in the hallways.

Austin said some have misconceptions about kids that feeds from a stereotype that all high schoolers are delinquents but, Austin added, that just isn't the case with most kids.

"Two officers being able to handle 2,500 kids, that's not bad at all," Palmer said.

On Sept. 7, the City Council authorized City Manager Steven Alexander to enter into a contract with Copperas Cove Independent School District for another year of policing services. According to the agreement, the services will cost CCISD about \$90,237. However, the SEOs pull patrol at the school and also for the department.

"I don't feel like I have two bosses," Palmer said.

Palmer said the visibility of the officers in the hallways leads to a benefit for both the department and the school - changing a misconception that police officers are only out to catch the bad guys and not to help.

"We help give a positive outlook. A lot of kids have a negative outlook on cops because of TV," Palmer said.

Austin said the department has engaged in the school policing services for more than 10 years. The role of SEOs have evolved over the years. Vice Principal Jack Brown said the officers take a very proactive approach to their duties on campus. Officers participate in classroom lectures and answer questions posed by students concerning their own rights as juveniles. The SEOs also work with the school's Campus Crime Stoppers and Texas Mentoring groups.

"You'd be surprised by the number of kids who, when I say their names, their faces light up," Palmer said.

Brown said there were several instances when Palmer stepped in and "the situation worked out well."

"Sometimes their presence just helps with calming the students," Brown said.

It's History: Bonds Hits 700

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) - Barry Bonds struggled to find the words to describe his latest swing into history. In truth, only the numbers could do it justice. With his 700th homer, Bonds made it a three-member club and moved ever closer to baseball's two greatest sluggers.

Bonds connected in the third inning of San Francisco's 4-1 win over San Diego on Friday night, leading the Giants to their sixth straight win in the opener of their final nine-game homestand.

With a 392-foot solo shot to left-center, Bonds became the first new member of the 700 club in 31 years, joining Babe Ruth and Hank Aaron.

"It's just unbelievable," Bonds said. "You



AP
Barry Bonds connects for his 700th career home run.

really can't put it into words to be in a class with those two great players. It's like you're dreaming and you're not dreaming. It's unbelievable, it's unreal."

Bonds' 42nd homer of the season is another steppingstone in the 40-year-old's march toward Ruth's

once-unthinkable 714 and Aaron's imposing 755. Bonds hasn't been slowed by age, steroid suspicions or the collective fear of pitchers and managers walking him with record frequency. Yet Bonds still clings to the hope of adding a World Series title to his list of accomplishments, and this victory kept the Giants (83-65) in front of the Cubs (81-64) by a half-game in the NL wild-card race.

"I have game left, and it's just really hard to fathom that I've hit 700 home runs and I can still play and still contribute," he said. "I just don't want to get satisfied, get too caught up into it all. Right now, I really want to focus on completing my career and, hopefully, coming back to the World Series."

Ichiro Breaks Singles Mark in Win vs. A's

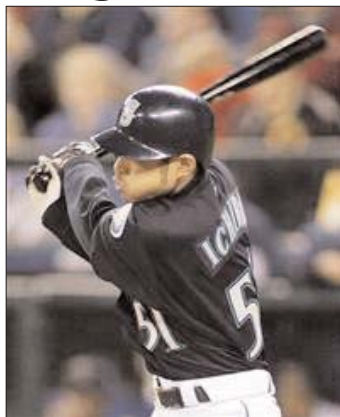
SEATTLE (AP) - The Oakland Athletics are beginning to feel the pressure of the tightening AL West race.

Rookie Greg Dobbs' three-run pinch-hit double started Seattle's five-run seventh inning, leading the Mariners to a 6-3 victory over the A's on Friday night. The loss cut the A's lead in the division to one game over Anaheim.

"It's tight, we know it's gonna be tight, but we have a long road trip and a lot of things can happen," Oakland's Scott Hatteberg said. "So we've got to try to put this one behind us."

Oakland has lost three out of four and eight out of 12. The A's have dropped five out of seven in Seattle this season.

Ichiro Suzuki broke the



AP
Seattle's Ichiro Suzuki hits his MLB record-breaking 199th single of the season against Oakland on Friday.

major league record with his 199th single of the season in the seventh. He bettered the mark of 198 set by Lloyd Waner of Pittsburgh in 1927.

Suzuki said he wasn't

aware of the record until he heard the Safeco Field crowd of 30,610 cheer.

"I didn't really understand why the fans were on their feet cheering for me," he said through a translator. "I didn't know what was going on."

Suzuki went 2-for-4, giving him 235 hits this season - 22 shy of the season record set by George Sisler of the St. Louis Browns in 1920. The Mariners have 15 games left.

Edgar Martinez got his 1,000th career RBI as a designated hitter, a record for RBIs at the position. Martinez, 41, is retiring at the end of the season.

Ron Villone (6-5) threw two scoreless innings for the win, and J.J. Putz pitched the ninth for his eighth save.

Sports Shorts

Suspension for Texas' Francisco

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) - Texas Rangers pitcher Frank Francisco was suspended for the rest of the season and fined Friday for throwing a chair that hit a woman and broke her nose during a game at Oakland earlier this week. Francisco appealed the suspension, which will last no less than 16 regular-season games if upheld, said Bob Watson, baseball's vice president in charge of discipline. He remained eligible to play pending a hearing before Bob DuPuy, baseball's chief operating officer.

Ark. Tailgaters Must Stay Clean

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (Democrat-Gazette) - Arkansas Razorbacks fans who party outside War Memorial Stadium will be expected to act less like hogs this year. No more campfires. No more glass bottles. No more private portable toilets. City officials say they expect the 20,000 fans partying before Saturday's game between the Arkansas Razorbacks and the Indians of the University of Louisiana at Monroe to comply with the rules. They don't expect police to have to arrest any tailgaters. The rules took effect last year after Nov. 6, the Hogs' second and last 2003 game at War Memorial Stadium. Tailgating that night was greatly diminished because of cold, wet weather.